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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3200  
INFO RHEHOND/DIR ONDCP WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//SCJ2/SCJ3/SCJ5//  
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF STATE AIR WING PATRICK AFB FL

UNCLAS BOGOTA 002179

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR INL/LP AND INL/RM  
DEPT FOR WHA/AND

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [SNAR](#) [SENV](#) [KCRM](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#)  
SUBJECT: NAS MONTHLY REPORT FOR MAY

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In May the Government of Colombia (GOC) aurally eradicated 9,540 hectares of coca and manually eradicated another 9,358 hectares of coca and 62 hectares of poppy. The Colombian National Police (CNP) seized 8.21 metric tons of cocaine HCl and coca base, sixteen metric tons of marijuana, and 42 kilos of heroin. They also captured 527.75 metric tons of precursor chemicals. END SUMMARY

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AERIAL ERADICATION PROGRAM  
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¶2. (SBU) In May, the aerial eradication program sprayed 9,540 hectares of coca. AT-802s operating from Cucuta, Tumaco, and Barrancabermeja sprayed 2,453, 5,295 and 1,792 hectares, respectively. This brings the year-to-date total to 52,649 hectares of coca sprayed. Due to consistently poor weather, the 2,000 hectare spray goal for Barrancabermeja was not met; however, the spray campaign in Narino continues to produce good results. There, the high coca re-plant rate appears to be a major factor in the abundance of viable eradication targets, especially in the Rio Patia basin.

¶3. (SBU) Eradication aircraft were involved in eleven hostile fire incidents resulting in seventeen impacts. This year there have been 28 hostile fire incidents and 62 impacts. Spray aircraft from Cucuta, working the FARC-controlled Catatumbo area, have sustained many of these impacts. COLAR intelligence sources have reported that FARC in the region have been instructed to fire at any spray aircraft. This order implies that the FARC believe that aerial eradication is a threat to their coca growing operations.

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MANUAL ERADICATION PROGRAM  
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¶4. (SBU) Year-to-date May was the most productive month in the GOC's 2008 manual eradication campaign. The GOC manually eradicated 9,358 hectares of coca and 62 hectares of poppy - bringing the year-to-date totals to 28,087 hectares of coca, 235 hectares of poppy, and 12 hectares of marijuana. During the month, 189 GME groups (consisting of 5,576 civilian personnel) were operating, primarily in "zone one" - Antioquia (79 GMEs), Bolivar (29 groups), Cordoba (20 groups), and Santander (6 groups) - and along the Ecuador border in Putumayo (35 groups) and Narino (9 groups). Operations also continued in Meta (8 groups) in support of the GOC's "Center for Integrated Action," and for the first time in Cauca, where three GMEs began operations. A landmine killed one

eradicator, one carabinero was killed in an ambush, and one CD brigade soldier lost both legs and an eye to a landmine. Through May, sixteen people (6 civilians and 10 security personnel) have died during this year's manual eradication operations, equaling the total for all of 2007.

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NATIONALIZATION  
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¶15. (U) Ambassador Garza and the nationalization team met with Colombian Vice Minister of Defense Juan Carlos Pinzon to discuss INL's "road ahead" for nationalization. Pinzon said he would respond to the presentation at a later date, and also suggested that he might request the Embassy to provide the same briefing to his service chiefs. NAS-Colombia continued to coordinate with the GOC to finalize the loan agreement conditions for eighteen UH-1N helicopters for the Colombian Army.

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ENVIRONMENTAL  
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¶16. (SBU) In May, the interagency complaints committee received eight new claims of alleged spray damage to legal crops. NAS paid approximately \$41,575 USD to ten complainants, including two claimants from Narino who received initial payments of approximately \$292.74 USD and will receive final compensation in June. There are currently 1,003 pending complaints.

¶17. (SBU) NAS and the GOC are working to standardize the methodology used to determine the amount of money received by an individual whose crops are damaged by spray activities. Under the current system crop damage values are assessed using local crop information. Due to reporting discrepancies and depending on the month, these values drastically fluctuate. The new system will more uniformly assess crop damage and restitution.

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PLAN COLOMBIA HELICOPTER PROGRAM (PCHP)  
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¶18. (SBU) PCHP aircraft flew a total of 806 hours. Aircraft operating from Tumaco, Cumaribo, Barrancabermeja and Tolemaida continued to provide air assaults, air movements, reconnaissance, medical evacuations, and support missions for the Colombian army's counter-drug (CD) brigade and other vetted COLAR units. Air assaults continue to be effective in securing spray blocks for the eradication program and interdiction operations. PCHP accumulated 28.6 hours supporting nine medical evacuation flights that transported eight military personnel. Year-to-date PCHP aircraft have accumulated 241.2 hours supporting the GOC's manual eradication program.

¶19. (SBU) In May COLAR aircrew training on the UH-60 and UH-1I aircraft was limited due to the need to reassign aircraft usually designated to training for higher priority mission support operations.

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CNP AIR SERVICE (ARAVI) SUPPORT  
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¶110. (SBU) ARAVI's NAS-supported fleet flew 1,782 mission hours. The seven UH-60 Black Hawks closed out the month with 176 flight hours. The manufacturer completed structural repairs on the UH-60 that had been grounded for a year. The aircraft is in final maintenance evaluations and should return to operational duties shortly.

¶111. (SBU) The Bell 212 fleet flew 245 mission hours. One aircraft is the final stages of depot maintenance consisting of rewiring and night vision goggle compatibility upgrades, and should return to flight operations shortly. The Huey II fleet flew 839 hours. Five aircraft are down for depot maintenance. The DC-3 fleet flew 304 hours. ARAVI awaits delivery of the first C-26 undergoing upgrades of intelligence gathering equipment at factory in the United States. The estimated arrival date is September.

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INTERDICTION  
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¶12. (SBU) During May the CNP seized 8.21 metric tons of cocaine HCl and coca base, 16.00 metric tons of marijuana, and 42 kilos of heroin. The CNP also destroyed nineteen cocaine HCl labs, 70 coca base labs and captured 527.75 metric tons of precursor chemicals.

¶13. (SBU) On May 2, the DIRAN heroin group seized 27 kilos of heroin being transported in a taxi near Cucuta. On the 13th, DIRAN's northern zone captured seven members of a former AUC narcotrafficking organization responsible for producing and transporting cocaine from southern Bolivar to La Guajira. On the 14th, DIRAN's southern zone captured 91.57 kilos of cocaine at a vehicle checkpoint near Florencia, Caqueta. On the 15th, the Tulua airmobile company destroyed a cocaine HCl lab in Choco containing 1.5 metric tons of cocaine, 2,570 gallons of liquid and 3 metric tons of solid precursors. On the 16th, the Tulua airmobile company captured a weapons cache containing 5,639 rounds of 5.56, 77 AK-47 rifle butts, and seven 40mm grenade rounds near Popayan. On the 17th, the Santa Marta airmobile company destroyed a cocaine HCl lab along with 215 kilos of cocaine, 3,067 gallons of liquid precursors, and 229 kilos of solid precursors in Norte de Santander. On the 21st, DIRAN's Villavicencio company arrested thirteen narcotraffickers and seized 1.04 metric tons of sulfuric acid near Granada, Meta. On the 21st, the Santa Marta airmobile company destroyed two cocaine HCl labs containing 2,699 gallons of liquid precursors and 169 kilos of solid precursors.

¶14. (SBU) On-going training courses include the eight-week explosives and demolitions course (with 40 students), the 21-week combat medic course (with 40 students), the long range reconnaissance course (with 40 students), and the eighteen-week Jungla international course with 107 students, including eighteen from other Latin American countries.

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PORT SECURITY PROGRAM (PSP)  
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¶15. (SBU) In May DIRAN's Ports and Airports Area (ARPAE) unit seized 39 kilos of cocaine at the Port of Buenaventura; 226 kilos of cocaine at the Port of Cartagena; three kilos of marijuana at the Port of Barranquilla; 20 kilos of cocaine at the Port of San Andres; 86 kilos of cocaine, four kilos of heroin, 11 kilos of marijuana and eight people arrested at the Bogota airport; 24 kilos of cocaine, 95 kilos of marijuana and two people arrested at the Cali airport; two kilos of cocaine at the Pereira airport; and five kilos of cocaine and two people arrested at Medellin's Rionegro airport. The CNP Director authorized to use the CNP canine academy for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to train Peruvian customs officials in June. In turn, CBP agreed to include select CNP personnel in this regional training initiative. The CNP Director also agreed to create a DIRAN canine company.

¶16. (SBU) The DIRAN polygraph unit conducted polygraph exams on 149 members of DIRAN. This included support for several internal affairs investigations of ARPAE personnel. One hundred seven passed the exam, 33 failed, and nine were inconclusive. Two Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) polygraphists conducted polygraph exams on six DIRAN polygraphists and five CNP Directorate polygraphist candidates. Three polygraphists and two candidates failed. The three CNP Directorate candidates that passed the exam will start a basic polygraph course in June.

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AIR BRIDGE DENIAL (ABD)  
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¶17. (SBU) The GOC sorted 6,543 tracks over Colombia in May of which four were declared "unknown, assumed suspect" (UAS). The GOC responded to all four UAS aircraft. The trackers were unable to locate two of them. The third was visually identified over the Caribbean en route to Central America. The fourth was inspected after it landed, but no illegal items were found.

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COLOMBIAN ARMY COUNTERDRUG (CD) BRIGADE  
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¶18. (SBU) The CD Brigade long-range surveillance detachment (LRSD), the 1st, and 3rd battalions continued supporting both aerial and manual eradication efforts and conducting interdiction operations from bases in Tumaco, Narino and Barrancabermeja, Santander. The 2nd battalion continued to conduct light infantry and air assault training in San Jose del Guaviare. In May the Brigade carried out counternarcotics operations against the FARC's 1st and Mahecha fronts and the Daniel Aldana Mobil Column and other criminal organizations in Valle del Cauca, Narino, Guaviare, and Bolivar. The Brigade secured a total of 6,932 hectares during aerial eradication operations and 560 hectares during manual eradication. The Brigade destroyed four HCl labs, five coca base labs, three enemy caches and seized 55 kilos of cocaine, 545 gallons of liquid coca, 11,800 gallons of liquid precursors, 3,894 kilos of solid precursors, 120 kilos of coca leaf in-process, and 334,884 coca seedlings. The Brigade also confiscated 607 rifles, one revolver, 1,490 magazines, two hand grenades, three radios, and one radio base with communications equipment. One Brigade soldier was seriously wounded by a landmine.

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REESTABLISH POLICE PRESENCE PROGRAM (CARABINEROS)  
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¶19. (SBU) The "Don Mario" search block continued operating in Cordoba, northern Antioquia and Choco throughout May. On the 15th, the Cordoba units seized 1.8 tons of cocaine in Santa Cruz. That same day, EMCAR squadrons in Cesar, working with an informant supplied by the search block, seized a large cache of weapons reportedly belonging to alias "Don Mario." Other EMCAR squadrons throughout Colombia continued to provide rural security.

¶20. (SBU) Operational highlights included 111 captured (10 narcotraffickers, 6 FARC/ELN, 8 BACRIM and 87 common criminals). Additionally, the EMCAR seized 380 weapons, 217 grenades, 12,143 gallons of liquid precursors, 1,836 kilos of solid precursors, 447 kilos of coca base, 2,385 kilos of cocaine, 95 kilos of marihuana, and 57 radios. They also destroyed fifteen base labs.

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BASE SECURITY/ROAD INTERDICTION  
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¶21. (SBU) Preparations are ongoing for next month's base defense course which will take place in the Gulf of Uraba region of Antioquia. The month-long course will address upgrades, renovations, and emerging security requirements at the antinarcotics base there.

¶22. (SBU) The site survey for improvements to the perimeter defense system at the antinarcotics base in San Jose de Guaviare was completed. The project, which entails refurbishing the bunker facilities and replacing the non-repairable bastion walls will begin as soon as the IDIQ for the materials is complete and the contract is awarded.

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NAVY TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE UNIT (GRUIN)  
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¶23. (SBU) GRUIN operational highlights for May include the seizure of 297 kilos of cocaine on the 9th near Boca Tinajones and the seizure of another 825 kilos of cocaine and the capture of four narcotraffickers on the 16th near Monitos.

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INDIVIDUAL DEMOBILIZATION PROGRAM  
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¶24. (SBU) In May a total of 305 individuals demobilized from Colombian terrorist organizations. Since the program began in August of 2002, a total of 15,883 individuals have deserted. Of this number, more than 9,700 deserted from the FARC. Interviews of demobilized individuals continue to provide invaluable information that has led to many major police and military successes. One

mid-level FARC leader, Elda Nellys Mosquera Garcia (alias "Karina"), who demobilized this month, will certainly lead to such successes. Her demobilization is a great psychological blow to the FARC and is being used to encourage her comrades to also demobilize.

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COMMUNICATIONS  
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¶25. (SBU) In May, DIRAN held the first of six MBITR communications training courses. Contractors conducted a site survey for the data expansion project taking place at DIRAN's Cali airport facility. This project will connect DIRAN's airport police to the CNP intranet.

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DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION (DDR)  
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¶26. (U) OAS-Trust for the Americas (OAS-TA) held a three day, NAS-sponsored capacity building training for NGOs working in the areas of drug prevention and treatment. Representatives from eighteen NGOs from ten Colombian departments participated. On the 16th, OAS-TA held part one of a two-part conference for journalists to discuss the media's role in drug prevention. Forty journalists and academics participated.

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MANAGEMENT SECTION  
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¶27. (U) Twenty four NAS employees or contractors completed the contracting officer representative (COR) course.

BROWNFIELD